

THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

Vol. IV. No. 4.]

T. W. T. CURTIS, EDITOR OF THIS NUMBER.

[April, 1851.]

THE GROWTH OF THE TEACHER.

IN all spheres of life, the demand for *the practical* is almost clamorous. "This is the age of Progress." Through all the ranks of society the word and the impulse is *Advance*. Life in all its phases is on the march. This is exhibited in the spread of those ideas concerning popular liberty which are upsetting and refashioning empires; in that change in the *heart* of Christendom which is discovering war to be a curse, and peace and its pursuits to be full of blessing; in a universal revision of the maxims of human government; in a more direct legislation for individual and consequently for the common happiness; in the arts of life, which are so fruitful in ingenious inventions for man's comfort; in book-making, in railroads, steam navigation, peace conventions, world's fairs, &c., &c. Last, *if* not least, it is seen in those various little Spartan bands of professional reformers, who seem determined that, if the world does not get on to the Millennium during their lives, it shall not be for want of enough "turning and overturning."

All these views of life and society indicate a restiveness of spirit struggling for advance, however misdirected the efforts for true progress may sometimes be. In all the departments of life there is manifestly a determination to move onward. It is not strange, then, that there should be such an aversion to the theoretical, and such a craving for the practical. For, though the first must always precede the second, the latter is more manifestly and more immediately the aliment of the progressive life. It is for this reason that the suggestion not unfrequently comes to the essay and lecture writer, "Write something practical," "Let it be practical." We acknowledge the reasonableness of the demand, and our willingness to heed it as we may be able.

We think the subject of the *teacher's individual development and growth* has as much of practical concern to him as any other

can have. It is of vital importance to him because of his manifold relations to society, present and prospective ; because of the inevitable connection there is between the education of a people and their destiny. The teacher cannot separate himself from vast responsibilities for the character of individuals and of communities. It is he who, in a great measure, may, if he will, assign to motives their just rank, and give to impulses their proper direction. He may, by earnest care and untiring zeal, so strengthen these motives in their supremacy, and establish those in their subordination, as to produce a character that shall bless the world. We do not think we overestimate the teacher's opportunities in saying that if he is *absolutely faithful*, he may give a right bias to the mind and heart of every pupil ever under his charge. We do not mean that he will effect this of his own independent strength, but that if he is faithful to his opportunities, God will be faithful to his promises, and will certainly bless the good endeavors of the teacher. If he is constantly awake to the highest welfare of his pupils, he will be able, by timely words, by an affectionate spirit, by kindly admonition, by all those genial influences which the devoted teacher can command, to foster and permanently fortify principles of uprightness ; to inspire the heart with a love for virtue that shall be abiding, and a hatred for vice that shall be lasting. So surely as the careful training of the shrub will give form and comeliness to the sturdy oak, so surely as the Author of organized matter with its sensibilities, is the Author of the mind with its sympathies, so certainly has the teacher the *opportunity* to give symmetry and direction to mind and character ; so certainly shall the labors of the faithful teacher be richly productive.

If it be true that the welfare and destinies of his *pupils* are, in so solemn a measure, committed to his influence, it is no less true that he is connected with the condition and destinies of *wide-spread communities*. The children of his school to-day are, to-morrow, to be mechanics, farmers, merchants, voters, law-givers, citizens, making the character of their neighborhood the copy of their own. And neighborhoods make States and nations. Is not this so ? More than this ; they are not only to mould the society of their own time, but that of long succeeding times. Our fathers are still alive in their influence upon American society and American destiny. Had their influence died with themselves, America, instead of being now a praise and a blessing to the world, might to-day have been a by-word and a hissing. *Your pupils*, fellow-teacher, and none others, are to be the *men* of another generation, and are to shape all our future history. According as you impress your character upon them, so will they stamp theirs upon society and the world. This is as inevitable as cause and consequence. If every teacher in

the land regarded these views, not as a fancy sketch, but had his soul filled with an earnest conviction of their truth, how changed an aspect would the face of society and of the whole world assume with the next generation.

If, then, the teacher is thus responsibly related to the highest welfare of individuals and of society, thus related to the present and the future, most assuredly he will not be held guiltless, by either God or man, if he is indifferent as to the manner in which he fulfils his sacred mission. God requires of every man to do *the best he can*, for himself and for others. If the teacher is contented to do to-day as he did yesterday or ten years ago, he will accomplish much less than he might. We must account, not for what we *have* done, but for what we *might have* done. We must account for *opportunity*. The providence of God has committed to our guidance and training, immortal minds and souls. He has entrusted to us, with every pupil, capacities for indefinite progress and development. He has given us the power and opportunities of influence over these capacities, and has intended that we should make every possible effort so to develop the faculties and shape the affections, as to prepare the possessor for usefulness here, and for a sublime career through eternity. If such a being, of whom we have the stewardship, wants but a single additional impulse to give to his whole character an inflexible direction to a life of virtue and a future of blessedness, and if because a single opportunity to give that impulse, was unnoticed or neglected by us, this child becomes a curse to the world and an outcast from God, wherefore shall the indolent, indifferent teacher be innocent?

We cannot, then, be excusable if we spare a possible effort, or remit, in the least degree, our zeal for the good of our pupils; and if we consider the teacher as a source of influences that are never to die, but are to be ever actively at work upon society as long as the world shall last, we shall perceive that he cannot innocently be indifferent in his profession, but is solemnly bound to be daily more faithful, to be daily more useful; that is to say, the teacher *must grow*.

If he is not anxious to do this, his duties will be imperfectly performed. Who, that has had even a few years' experience, cannot remember that he has at one time expressed opinions which more knowledge or longer experience has greatly modified or essentially changed? In other words, he has, upon some subject of ordinary study, or some question of morals, taught for truth what he now believes to be error. Does it give him no regret to know that this error, if still uncorrected, is even now alive and at work upon the individual thus taught? that it is silently modifying those opinions which affect the life, and remotely influence society? *Can we teach error with impunity,*

when nothing that we teach shall be without producing a certain effect? We should, then, study to-day that we may ourselves be better enlightened, that we may know more for to-morrow; that whatever we teach then, whether upon moral or natural science, may have more of truth and less of error. This is what we mean by the *Growth of the Teacher*. If he is not thus anxious to improve himself, the mistakes that he made when he began his career he may daily make to the end of it,—mistakes that may be ultimately and widely fatal. If there be one who is careless in respect to his own daily progress, and knows the possible consequences of his indifference, he is not fit for his profession. He had better take the spade or wood-saw forthwith. Better spend life digging dirt, than recklessly botching immortal minds. Again, though the indifferent teacher may not often teach actual error, if he neglects to extend the boundaries of his knowledge, and to discipline and strengthen continually his own intellectual and moral energies, he will be certain to teach much less of important truth than he might. The sins of the teacher are emphatically those of omission rather than those of commission. But though perhaps of a less aggravated nature, they are nevertheless sins.

The teacher should advance because society is advancing. If the rest of the world had continued in the dark ages, the teacher would have had a tolerable excuse for stopping there too. But the world, under its Christian teachers, has come forth from its gloom. It has set forward on a course of progress that has been "uniformly accelerated" to the present time. Every day increases the demands upon the teacher's energies, his thoughts, his knowledge, his force of character. The sphere of his duties is continually enlarging, and the relations that connect him with society are constantly multiplying. His opportunities for doing something that shall bless the world are consequently increasing. He cannot meet his augmented responsibilities, nor improve his greater opportunities, but by continual accessions of strength to his mental and moral character. The times in which we live demand men—men of noble hearts and well-disciplined minds, those who can energize and help onward the great movements of the age. They whose attainments are an ability to "read, write, and cipher," are permitted to fall into the rear, and there they will never be molested by any summons to the front. All honor to the men of a former generation. But he who in all the essentials copies the teaching of a hundred years ago, will furnish few recruits to the *leaders* of the age. His disciples will be those who "*fall in*." If the teacher of this day would reinforce the moving masses of Christendom, with those who can wisely guide and efficiently serve society in its determined career onward, the preparation is to be made in the school-room.

Moreover, the pupils of to-day are to be the *men* of another generation. They are to be actors in events which those of our own times are but faintly foreshadowing. When we compare the present condition of society and of the world, with what it was thirty years ago, and when we glance at some of those great ideas and movements which, yet struggling in their embryo life, seem destined to shape society anew, can we doubt that those are now under our charge who are in the next generation to be engaged in most stirring scenes? As they are trained and moulded now, so will they *be* and *do* then. Let us remember that we are to educate them for a period that is in advance of the present. If our aim is to prepare them for life as it now is, and we succeed in this and no more, they will not be fitted for the state of things to which the world will have advanced in twenty or thirty years. The teacher must therefore anticipate society. He must advance more rapidly than the world about him. He must be able to discern the signs of the times. With the light of the present he must discover the outline of the future, and judge in some measure of the demands which the future will make on the children of the present. The more sure and rapid, therefore, the teacher's progress in the development of all his own powers, in the maturing of his judgment, and the completion of his character, the more competent will he be to prepare his pupils for a noble career of usefulness in the world. To this destiny should he shape all his instructions and efforts.

Although much that is *fine idea and nothing else*, has been generated on the subject of Human Progress, yet advancement is obviously the destiny of the race. The world will assuredly move onward. They who would move foremost may, and they who will not, must, and will be, dragged behind. The teacher is at liberty to choose his place.

These views seem to us practical. They do not to be sure suggest anything in regard to particulars of instruction or discipline—nothing in regard to forms, modes, or fashions, which style of discussion seems with some to embrace all that can be included within the practical. But we think it concerns the teacher's daily, hourly life, to be constantly mindful of his connection with the destinies of individuals and of society; and however much we may incline to regard as a mere speculation, the idea that we are responsibly related to the welfare of others, *the Creator has made it a fact*; and however unconcerned we may be now, the time is coming, when Almighty God will judge us by this fact.

For his own good, too, the teacher must grow, or he must decay. There is no other alternative. Throughout the wide dominions of organic matter we know of no condition but life or death — no progress but toward mature and perfect life, or, by

decline and decay, toward death. In the whole kingdom of nature there is no pause. When further development is arrested, forthwith decline succeeds. The history of vegetable life is that of intellectual. For man, beast, and flower, there is one universal law — growth and decay, life and death. The teacher's mind must be daily ripening. He must daily make new deposits in his treasury of knowledge. He must establish more firmly tomorrow than he did to-day, the mastery over his own spirit. He must add something to his energies, to his ardor of spirit, to his self-devotedness. He must increase in discretion, in wisdom. He must have more of the humbler virtues, patience, humility, charity. *He should be more careful in respect to the example of his life.* He should be better acquainted with himself, with his pupils, and with the nature of his arduous but glorious work. All this and much more must be the teacher's daily aim and attainment, or he may be sure of soon declining toward professional decrepitude, dotage, and death. There never lived an exception to this, and there never will be one until the laws of our being are changed.

We have urged the growth of the teacher as important. We purpose to suggest some of the modes by which this result may be promoted. We may say, first, that whatever contributes to improve him as a man, will also make him a better teacher. He has to deal with susceptibilities of mind and heart that sympathize with his own character. Therefore, the more fully the excellences of mental and moral character are developed in himself, the more vigorously and promptly will corresponding qualities be manifested in his pupils. He must therefore ever have in his mind the true ideal of a perfect man; and according as his daily life exhibits this ideal, so will be the development of every manly virtue in his pupils. Let the teacher remember, as he goes before his school for the day, that he *should be the model man*, and that to a certain extent he will be so regarded by his pupils. Let him then be heedful and vigilant, that so far as his pupils assimilate to himself, they shall be the better, not the worse for so doing.

The teacher will contribute to his growth by daily adding to his knowledge. If he is employed in teaching common Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic, his qualifications to teach those subjects will be constantly increasing as he increases his knowledge in regard to them. And there is no teacher living who knows so much in regard to any or all the humbler branches of study that he can know no more. It is the duty of every one, as it should be his delight, to enrich his teachings in any department by his habits of private diligence. He should study beforehand the subjects he is to teach. We do not say the text-book, but the subject. For books contain but the moiety

of knowledge. He must not be a slave to his text-book. He must range without and beyond. The regions of knowledge are to any faithful student the regions of immensity. There is no truth nor science that need be uninteresting. There is none in itself so dry, but that the teacher may, by diligent research, and a thorough acquaintance with whatever is worth knowing about it, awaken a spirit of earnest enthusiasm in its pursuit. If there is one who doubts this, let him try the experiment. If in any common study that he has been teaching for years, and that he thinks himself therefore familiar with, he is in the habit of meeting his class without any previous preparation, let him give his next lesson an hour of faithful study, and if he does not honestly believe that his recitation is more profitable than it would have been without such previous study, he is at liberty to believe either himself, or his pupils, or both, dunces, and nothing else. But let him not speak profanely of the *subject*. For if a recitation is ever tedious and a drudgery, it is assuredly because of unfaithfulness somewhere. God has made all knowledge precious and delightful, and if it does not appear so to us, it is because we are too obtuse to perceive its beauties, or too indolent to search for them. Let every teacher be assured that his improvement will be impossible unless he is anxious to make daily additions to his knowledge. If this be true, the teacher can never afford to be idle. Every hour we spend in foolish gossip or profitless sauntering might be spent in garnering a little harvest of precious knowledge, which in worth to us and to others would be increasing in geometrical ratio through time and eternity. That the teacher may suffer no hour to return to Heaven inscribed *misspent*, he should always have by him, to occupy the straggling minutes, some book, connected with the subjects of his daily teachings, or on general literature, history, or science. If any one of our readers who is anxious for self-improvement, and has never adopted this nor any other similar practice, will try it for six months, we are sure he will testify at the end of that time that he *has grown*. The growing teacher will then be constantly increasing in knowledge.

He will also be constantly adding to his wisdom. Knowledge without wisdom is power without control, and is as likely to become a great evil as a great good. The wise man is he who not only has a mind full of knowledge, but is able to make constant and appropriate use of it in the great interests of life. He is a wise teacher who has not only gained much from books and men, but is also able to do much with what he has acquired. Nor will he find the sources of his growing wisdom in books alone. He will seek and receive instruction from his observation of men, from the daily occurrences of life within and without the school-room. He will be free from everything like routine, always a

deadening incubus on any teacher who is its slave. He will carefully observe the operation of his plans and his general school-room policy. And whenever there is faultiness, he will be prompt to discover and amend. Discretion is an essential element of wisdom, and should be diligently cultivated as a fixed trait of character. If the teacher possesses this, he will understand how judiciously to adapt means to ends. He will know how to combine moderation with promptness and decision, gentleness with firmness. He will endeavor to increase his moral power over his school, and, compared with this, he will value physical force but little. He will seek to exert those quiet influences which win confidence and attachment, which secure an earnest and strong good will. If he succeeds in this, he may almost mould his school as he will. He will consider it of the first importance to make his pupils believe he is their true friend, and in order to do this, he will sincerely be so. He will tell them kindly and plainly of their faults as pupils and as individuals, assist them in their difficulties, sympathize in their sorrows, be interested in their diversions, and be happy when he sees them so.

If the teacher wishes to be daily more efficient and successful, his daily pursuits should occupy more of his thoughts. His school should ever be uppermost in his mind, should engross his whole soul. He should regard his profession as a noble one, and well worthy of all the best energies of his nature, of all his self-devotion. His earliest and his latest thought of the day should be of his school. To this he should consecrate his time, his strength, his life. He should teach because he loves to, and not because he can do nothing else. He should not be satisfied with partial success, but should diligently employ all possible means for becoming a better teacher. His views of duty and responsibility should not be limited to the present, but he should feel that his daily work, whether good or bad, is to be producing and re-producing results through all eternity. He should make the nature of his duties a subject of careful study. He should reflect more upon the great purposes of study and education, and judge more accurately of the object the teacher should have in view. We fear mistake is often made here. It seems to be a common impression that knowledge is to be sought *as an end*, and not *as a means*, while the truth is, knowledge is of little or no more value as an end than wealth. The true object of all knowledge, as well as of every other acquisition, should be to aid in such a cultivation of the moral and intellectual powers, as shall qualify the soul for indefinite progress in virtue and goodness. Unless knowledge as a means is made to have a reference to this result, it is good for nothing. Unless it be made to give us a higher discipline and a more perfect development, it is

worth no more than any other acquisition. The growing teacher will not be so anxious to crowd the minds of his pupils with knowledge, as to give their powers of mind and heart that fullness of expansion and that vigorous strength which shall fit them for extended usefulness and permanent happiness. His pupils will not be the passive recipients of ideas. *They will be thinkers.* Nor will they *know* less than those who are taught to regard knowledge as an end. For if the mental energies are kept constantly awake and active by vigorous exercise, the pupil will take delight in seeking for himself the hidden treasures of knowledge. The teacher cannot overestimate the importance of training his pupils to think for themselves. He should not permit a recitation to close without affording an opportunity for earnest mental effort. The range of his questions upon the subject studied should be such as constantly to require this, using the text-book merely *as* a text-book. When Sir Isaac Newton was asked in what way he had made such vast discoveries and had accomplished so much for science, he replied "*by thinking.*" And all that has ever been done for science or civilization, has been done in the same way. Let not the teacher permit his pupils to be the mere dronish swallows of knowledge. Such an education is only better than none. But let their minds be constantly working and thinking. Education will then be neither irksome nor worthless, but both profitable and delightful. For to be inactive is to be weak, and to no child of ordinary capacities is there any delight in inactivity or imbecility. Such views of education, and daily reducing them to vigorous practice, will contribute immeasurably to the growth of the teacher. For the great law of the universe that action and reaction are equal, whether it be in regard to matter, morals, or mind, prevails here. As matter cannot act upon fellow matter without receiving the same impulse it gives, as man cannot do his fellow man good or evil without blessing or cursing himself, so mind cannot strengthen kindred mind without receiving equal benefit. He cannot train his pupils to be earnest, vigorous thinkers, without becoming more and more so himself.

The teacher who would be daily adding to his efficiency, must cultivate a genial spirit. He must acquaint himself with the interests of his pupils and be interested in them, enjoy what they may innocently enjoy, sincerely sympathize in their little and larger griefs, make all their pleasures and sorrows really his. He must convince them that he is with his whole heart devoted to their true happiness and good. Let him by all patient, kindly, gentle ways, win their love, and there is no limit to the good he may do them.

When opportunities for self-improvement do not come, he must seek them, and he must use them when they do. When Teachers'

Associations, Conventions, and Institutes do not come to him, he must go to them. Such occasions are feasts to earnest teachers' souls. They give courage, strength and zeal. No teacher can share with kindred minds in the exchange of sympathies, opinions, and counsel, without most material and lasting advantage. Let him be a constant reader and supporter of educational journals, or at least, some *one*, and if but one, let that be the best — (*The Massachusetts Teacher.*) He thus continually gathers from the wisdom, opinions, and practices of others, compares them with his own, corrects faults and copies excellences. He must be "quick to learn" from his daily experience, and not require to be taught the same lesson twice. And every day should not only teach him something, but should teach him much, as it will, if he thoroughly review and examine it with this desire. The teacher must be a student. He must never think his work done. To be sure he must take time for recreation and exercise. But beyond this, he is an idler. Hours must be daily passed with his books in earnest study. Books are the teacher's great sources of knowledge, and he will not have a fulness of knowledge without seeking it. The little plant daily puts forth farther its tiny roots, seeking nourishment. By patiently doing this from day to day, the little plant becomes the stately oak. Let the teacher remember that the law of vegetable is the law of intellectual growth. If habits of busy toil rather than luxurious ease make the life a little shorter, what matters it? Is it not truly better to wear out than to rust out? If we may lead a life of noble usefulness with constant, wearing toil, or have length of days with inglorious indolence, who would not make the choice of Achilles?

Fellow Teacher, it has not been our intention to exhaust the subject we have thus discussed, but simply to suggest it as a topic deserving your daily reflections. Does it not demand more of your frequent and earnest thought than it has hitherto received? In view of its importance, of its practical connection with the amount and kind of our influence upon others, of its certain connection with results that are to reach through life, far onward into Eternity, in view of the facilities we possess for our personal advancement and of the sublime motives urging us to seek it, let us awaken our energies anew, form nobler purposes, make better resolutions, think more upon our duties, our responsibilities, and opportunities, strive more earnestly and faithfully to accomplish something for those who now directly receive our influence, and for those who are to receive it indirectly for all time. Let such be our faithful and earnest endeavors, and if in Time our toils are not appreciated, we can well afford to wait; Eternity shall prove we have not lived in vain.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS OF MENTAL EXERTION.

"Laugh ye who boast your more mercurial powers,
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,
Fearless, a soul that does not always think."—*Cowper*.

THE confession of Cowper, would, I doubt not, be the confession of many others, if they were constrained to own the truth. It is certainly a very fortunate, and I doubt not a wise provision for such, that the operations of their minds are concealed, if they choose to conceal them, from all human observation, so that they can think or let it alone, just as they please, and *nobody* will ever know it.

There are those, I am aware, who entertain the opinion that the mind is ever active, knowing no respite and needing no pause; that at every moment of existence, even in sleep, it is still pursuing its onward progress, and maintaining an unbroken succession of ideas; that like the ceaseless flow of a river,

"lahitur,
Et labetur, in omne volubilis ævum."

It is not contended, indeed, that the mind is all this time conscious of its own operations, or, if conscious at the time, that it retains the recollection of this consciousness; but it is inferred from the immateriality of the mind, that it can never remain dormant. It is not my purpose, in this article, to investigate the truth of this opinion, which has been entertained both by the learned and by the unlearned. In the sense in which Cowper says he was conscious that he did not always think, few persons, I imagine, will be disposed to deny, that they too are conscious of the same fact. It may be safely presumed that most persons have at times experienced that degree of physical exhaustion, which incapacitated them for any well-directed and efficient mental effort. We do, indeed, sometimes meet with those whose "more mercurial powers" really seem to need no respite; from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, and even until the noon of night, they keep the machinery of their minds in constant motion—driving its engine by the powerful energy of their own vito-galvanic battery. Nothing seems to stay the strong current of their thoughts, but their own determination.

That such persons should regard the mind as "something distinct from the body," and as independent of it in its operations, is not perhaps so remarkably strange. But to those who, by their daily experience, are compelled to admit the truthfulness of that declaration of the wise king of old, "much study is a weariness of the flesh," or to those whose waning health and exhausted physical energies incapacitate them for any considerable degree of mental effort, and which admonish them that

they have "need to make a pause," (perhaps a "solemn pause,") to such, I say, the subject of this article—physical conditions of mental exertion—will not, as they peruse it, strike their minds as words of strange and doubtful import. To them, at least, the assertion that such is the connection of the human mind and body, that certain conditions of the latter are requisite to sustain the active energies of the former, will have all the force of a self-evident proposition. Their own conscious experience is to them all the proof that is requisite. Admitting, then, the proposition to be correct, it becomes a matter of some interest to know what these conditions are; for, just in so far as they are wanting, may we infer that deleterious or deranged action will ensue. Let us then inquire,

What are some of the physical conditions of mental exertion?

1st. The organ of the mind must be perfectly formed in all its parts.

The brain is the great sensorium of the mind, by impressions upon which, the mind gains all its ideas of the existence, qualities, properties, and relations of external objects. These are the primary sources of all its cogitations; for how is it possible to think of that whose existence is not either obvious to our senses, or inferred from the existence of objects that are? The brain is, then, the medium of the mind's communication with the external world, and the organ of all its operations.

If, then, the organ of the mind be imperfectly formed, the medium of its communication with other objects, is, just in so far as this imperfection obtains, interrupted, and its capacity for receiving and retaining those impressions requisite to a correct knowledge of these things, is diminished or impaired. How can it be expected that the eye, for instance, should rightly perform its office, if it be in any considerable degree defective? If the focal distance of its lenses be either too long or too short, the light that is transmitted through them, will be either too diffused or too converged, and will fail to form a distinct image upon the retina. Thus objects will appear indistinct, confused, or distorted. So, likewise, if that portion of the brain, which is especially adapted to receive the final impression first made upon the retina, and by means of the optic nerve, transmitted to that part, be defective in structure or otherwise, we may justly infer that a correct impression will not be made.

There are some persons, who, owing to a defect, as I suppose, either in some organ of sense, or in the organization of some parts of the brain, or of the abnormal condition of those parts, cannot discriminate between particular qualities of color, sound, flavor, or odor, which are perfectly distinguishable to most other persons. I know an individual of unquestionable veracity, who

assured me that he could not distinguish the colors red and green ; admitting, I presume, these colors to be of equal brilliancy. I directed his attention to the red and the green figures in the carpet before us ; he said they appeared to him of the same color. The red rose and its green leaves must then, I suppose, present no pleasing contrast to his eye. I have heard of other similar instances.

If, then, any of the organs of sense, or those parts of the brain which receive and treasure up the impressions made primarily upon these organs, be defective, all that class of ideas which reach the mind through the medium of the defective faculty, must be imperfect ; and hence all reflections upon these imperfect ideas, must also be of an indefinite character.

2d. The organ must be in a sound or healthy condition.

If a limb of the body, as the arm, be paralyzed, it cannot perform its office. If it be inflamed with rheumatism, every effort to use it will be painful, and its action will be inefficient. The arm may, nevertheless, be perfect in its formation. Every bone, joint, ligature, muscle, nerve, artery and vein, may be perfectly formed and properly adjusted.

And so it is with the brain. It may be complete as to its formation, but if it be diseased, wholly or in part, no just dependence can be placed upon its efficient action. It is a well known fact, that those diseases which affect the brain, do more or less affect the mind. It is also known that parts of the brain may be affected or injured, and a consequent degree of insane action, or want of action will be produced. Monomania is a disease too fully recognized at the present day, to admit of a doubt as to its reality.

As the brain is only a part of our corporeal system, nourished by the same circulating and assimilating process, and connected with every other part of it, even to the minutest fibre, by means of the spine and its innumerable ramifications, called nerves, which are of the same substance as the brain, it is reasonable to infer, and no one will dispute the correctness of the inference, that there should be a sympathy of the parts, and that when one member suffers, the others should also suffer with it. If one part receives an injury, the vitality of the other parts is directed to the injured part, to sustain the requisite healing process, and to effect the necessary repairs.

As all sensations are transmitted to the brain, by means of the nerves, if these sensations be uncommonly intense, the habitual current of the mind must be disturbed, or deranged, just in proportion to the degree of that intensity. The brain itself may become diseased in consequence, and its efficiency permanently impaired or destroyed. Intense physical suffering is well known to induce, in many cases, mental insanity. The

brain, then, and the corporeal system in general, must be in a healthy condition to insure correct and efficient mental action.

3d. The organ of the mind must be in a rested condition.

When the laborer, fatigued with the toil of many hours, attempts to urge on the system to perform an unusual amount of labor, his wearied limbs seem reluctant to obey the high behests of the will, and in their own silent but significant language, declare their full conviction of the truth of that doctrine of ethics, that duty cannot exceed the limit of physical ability, and imploringly ask for

“Tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep.”

Who, that has exhausted the physical force derived from his daily food, does not know how toilsome are all subsequent efforts? Nature, indeed, has so constituted man, that in cases of emergency, he can, by the strong impulse of his will, push on the system to most extraordinary efforts; but he is sure to pay the penalty if he does. This usual draft upon his physical resources will inevitably result in a corresponding degree of subsequent languor, in painful sickness, or in sudden death. Such drafts are most unwise; nature forbids it, and gives the needful alarm; calls home her forces, and demands rest; and it is well if her admonitions be regarded. They are impolitic, for in case no serious injury be inflicted upon the system, the loss of time, requisite to make the necessary repairs, more than counterbalances, in ordinary cases, all the advantage which may have been secured. This capacity of the system was designed for times of pressing emergency, or of imminent peril, when, without it, great interests, or perhaps life itself, might be endangered.

It is thus with the mental faculties: a certain amount of mental labor may be performed without injury, nay, may conduce to the healthy condition of the brain, and to an increase of mental vigor; but beyond this, exhaustion, permanent debility, disease or death.

The capacity of different individuals for mental effort, is indeed widely different. Even in healthy organizations, there is great diversity, much more in unhealthy ones. There are those who are incapable of protracted mental effort, without consequent injury. There may be the appearance of health even when there is real debility; the cause is internal, and, to the unpractised eye, undiscoverable. There is little doubt that what is often stigmatized as *laziness*, is in many instances real exhaustion, arising from physical causes, involuntary and constitutional—and for which, the individual thus afflicted is rather to be pitied than censured. The surest index, perhaps, by which one may detect in another this exhaustion, is the eye. Lack of lustre, as if the soul were wanting, a heavy movement or immo-

bility of the eyeballs, a vacant stare, dilatation of the pupils, and drooping of the eyelids, are the sure indications of mental weariness, and the signals of nature demanding rest. To force the mind beyond this limit, is an act of violence that will work out its own vindication.

No fixed rule, in regard to the amount of mental labor which may be safely performed by any one, can be laid down. Every one may, however, after a little experience, decide for himself what his constitution will enable him to endure. He must not think of measuring his own capacity by that of others. He must not interpret the old adage—"what man has done, man can also do"—to mean what *any one* man has done, *every other* man can do; for this would be to assume, that all are naturally endowed with equal capacity, which, evidently, is not the fact. If he cannot safely perform all he would, he must be content to do what he can. By a prudent exercise of his faculties, he may gradually increase their capability of action. Young students often commit great imprudences in this respect. In their eagerness to ascend the "hill of science," they tax their nervous system to the extreme limit of endurance, exhaust their energies, and, if they do not stumble and fall, they are, at least, compelled to halt, however impatient, and linger on the way long hours, perhaps weeks, months or years, in order to recruit. Like the crow in the fable, resolved to do great things, exceeding their ability, they only get entangled in the fleece of their intended prey, and get their wings clipped for their rash folly.

4th. The organ of the mind must, by excitation, be put in a susceptible condition. During the hours of "soft repose," every slumbering faculty ceases to preform its wonted office. The eye is closed to all external objects, the ear hears not, it may be, the tread of the midnight robber, the nerves are unconscious of touch,—these outer sentinels are all inactive; no intelligence from the external world penetrates the now silent abode of the soul. Reflection ceases, and with it all consciousness. Only those motions of the system requisite to sustain life, such as the pulsations of the heart, circulation of the blood, and respiration, continue; but the mind knows it not. Where is it? Has it gone on a voyage of discovery to the spirit land, and left the body to its repose?—or is *it* too, that ethereal essence that animates, actuates and controls the body, fast asleep? It sees not, hears not, knows not that aught else exists, or that even itself exists. Ah! but its *faculties* are all suspended, its *organs* are all dormant. The delicate machinery of thought has ceased its rapid motion; and the manufacture of its exquisitely fine and impalpable tissue, has for the time been entirely suspended. Why is this? If the body be weary, let it repose; but must the immortal mind too be chained down in oblivion and silence,

till its grosser companion shall be refreshed and shall awake? It must be so while they sojourn together. If but once the mind stir, it will set the wheels of thought in motion; and if it do not arouse all the operators of its tenement, its tapestry will be strangely woven, and the figures in it drolly conceived, and most fantastically and capriciously arranged—fit only for “airy castles,” far away in the land of dreams.

When the physical and mental faculties have become refreshed and invigorated by rest, they are then ready for action. This action is caused by excitation. But how is excitation produced? It is the theory of some, that there is in man, and animals too, a subtile fluid, electrical, galvanic, magnetic, nervo-vital, or whatever it may be called, generated or evolved in the system—it may be, by chemical action—by which all his operations, both mental and physical, are effected. The will is thought to be the motive power which regulates and controls this fluid, in all voluntary action, and by it, regulates and controls the whole system. Its action upon the muscles, by contracting or expanding them, produces all the multitudinous movements of the animal frame. Numerous experiments upon the living and the recently defunct subject, by means of galvanism, &c., seem to establish this fact. The action of this fluid upon the brain, is thought to be equally essential to all our mental operations; though the precise mode of its action is, perhaps, past finding out.

In sleep, evidently, the organ of the mind is not in a condition for mental action. But even in the wakeful state, there is a condition of this organ, or of some portions of it, in which, although the external exciting causes are operating, no distinct impression is made upon it; and of course, no distinct idea of these causes is received. It is said, in such cases, that there is a want of attention. Doubtless; but if attention be a condition of the mind, and the mind acts by means of its organ, then is attention aught else but a condition of the organ, induced by mental volition? By the act of attention, the organ is put in the proper physical condition for receiving any given impression. This condition is the result of excitation. To fix the attention upon any given subject, is sometimes far less difficult than at other times; owing, I apprehend to two causes—the rested condition of the organ, and its excitation, caused by the action of the vital fluid upon it; by which it is rendered susceptible to any impression that may be made upon it. As in the photographic process, it is not sufficient, merely to put the silvered plate in the focus of the lens of the camera obscura, in order that the desired image of an object be formed upon it,—it must also, by the use of appropriate fluids, be rendered susceptible to the impressions of reflected light. When thus prepared,

the plate is put in the proper position, and the chemical action of the light, as reflected from the object with different degrees of intensity, pictures upon its surface an exact image of the object. The action of the vital fluid upon any particular position of the brain, seems to put it in a somewhat analogous condition of susceptibility.

But the limits of this article forbid that I should pursue this subject much farther. The main object I have had in view, is to show the dependence of the mind, in its present connection with the body, upon certain conditions of the latter, for its capability of efficient action. It appears to me that this fact is too much overlooked, and that inattention to it often leads the eager student, and the ambitious teacher, in the process of mental development, to make serious and sometimes fatal mistakes.

I heard it stated in the pulpit, a short time ago, that in some circles it is considered quite unfashionable for a person to have *any soul*; and that the daily practice of most men might lead to the supposition that they really thought they had none. I have seen some persons who appeared to consider it quite disreputable to have *any body* that needed to be cared for, to preserve its health. A long list of ailments, particularly, nervous affections, are, by such, deemed to be mere phantoms of the brain, having no real existence; and therefore, none but females, at most, should be pardoned for being troubled with them. Such persons may, indeed, have a vague idea that the mind and the body have some connection, but their practice might suggest the doubt, if they had ever duly considered the fact.

In general, all the conditions requisite to a healthy and vigorous action of the body, are requisite to the healthy and vigorous action of the mind; because the operations of the mind are carried on by its material organ, which, being a part of the corporeal system, is subject to the same general laws of health. It must have nourishment to strengthen it; it must have fit objects to excite it to action; it must have the breath of heaven to inspirit it; it must, if it would bound lightly over the billows of thought, have *sunlight* at least, if not "moonlight and starlight;" though, notwithstanding our *Lunatic* asylums seem to disparage the genial mental influence of the *lunar* orb, yet from time immemorial, she has, I believe, been wooed and worshipped by a class of beings called poets, whose mental effusions, to be sure, seem to possess something of that dreamy character which moonlight is supposed to impart. W. R.

THOUGHT AND ITS EXPRESSION.

MR. EDITOR,—I wish to beg the use of your pages, in order to introduce to your readers a work on Grammar, entitled, "The Thought, and its Expression," by Henry Scheib. I take the trouble to do this, because I believe I shall confer a benefit on young teachers especially, by leading them to examine a work which will, I think, assist them very materially in giving instruction on the subject of grammar.

I shall make no remarks on the manner in which the author has executed his task, for I must believe that teachers are getting indifferent to the recommendations with which it is the fashion to bolster up school-books. I shall therefore only present a synopsis of the volume, accompanied by illustrations at some length, of the author's mode of leading the pupil forward.

In the preface we are told the principal elements common to all languages, and shown that grammatical instruction must begin with the *sentence*. Then follows an illustration of the manner in which the teacher should introduce each branch of the subject to the pupil's mind. And before quoting, as I propose to do somewhat from this part, let me say that the German method of instruction seems to differ from the one usually employed in our schools, in this: that we incline more towards requiring the pupil to repeat what he has learned of the text-book put into his hands, and the German teacher leads the child's mind forward, by conversation and suggestion, to a required point, and there stops, that the pupil may fix his knowledge by copious exercises. I shall omit all that I can consistently with giving an idea of the method pursued.

"*Teacher*. Charles, you have doubtless spoken this morning; can you recollect something of it? [The pupil repeats some remark.]

"*T*. Of whom [or of what] did you speak?"

It is now, after asking enough of such questions, shown that in speaking we always speak of some person, animal or thing.

"*T*. Now let me tell you something: 'The watch.' Of what did I speak?"

"*Pupils*. Of the watch.

"*T*. What did I say of the watch?"

"*Pupils*. (No answer.)

"*T*. I have not indeed expressed a thought. I will tell you something: 'The watch is too slow.' Of what did I speak? What did I say of it? &c. Now what can you say of the black-board? &c., &c.

"*Pupils*. The black-board is black, (square, smooth, &c., &c.,) &c., &c.

"*T.* Edward, name anything you have seen on your way to school.

"*Pupil.* I saw a dog.

"*T.* Tell me something of the dog," &c., &c., &c.

"*T.* Come here to the window. Do you see that girl with an empty bucket in her hand going towards the pump? Now what do you think about that?

"*Pupils.* The girl is going for water.

"*T.* Of *whom* do you think? *What* do you think about her?" &c.

"*T.* Now you see it is the same with *thinking* as with speaking; there must be *something* of which we think, and we think *something* about it," &c., &c.

At the close of the exercise the teacher says:

"*T.* Now what have we learned? (Rehearsing.) What does *thinking* mean? Do we hear what a person thinks? Why not? Can we make our thoughts audible? In what way? Can a thought be expressed in words inaudibly? How? What is a sentence?"

The teacher now requests the pupils to read the first paragraph of the manual, and puts the necessary questions in order to see whether everything is well understood: after which he proceeds to the first lesson. The first paragraph is on Thinking and Speaking; first come some definitions, and then the

"1st lesson. Express a thought about each of the following things: the dog—the goat," &c., &c., &c.

§ 2. Treats of *Conceptions* and *Conception-words*. We have in our minds—

(1.) Conceptions of *things*.

(2.) Conceptions of *qualities* of things.

(3.) Conceptions of *actions* of things.

These are illustrated and the *conception-words* named.

Then follow Exercises for the pupils.

"Name the things found in the school-room, on a farm," &c., &c.

"Write the names of things used for building houses," &c., &c.

"Tell *how* the following things can be; the door," &c., &c.

"Tell what the following persons and things do, or can do," &c., &c.

§ 3. *The pure Simple Sentence.* "The dog is a quadruped," "The dog is watchful," "The dog barks," &c., &c.

The *subject*, and the *predicate*, is each defined.

The manner of forming sentences illustrated.

The manner in which the *relation* of the predicate to the subject is indicated, is pointed out.

Then follow copious exercises, of which I give, as in other cases, only a few, as specimens.

"Form sentences of the following words, so that one shall ex-

press something about the other : Fire, burn. Iron, rust," &c., &c.

"Say of the following *how* they are respecting their color, &c. Soot, Milk," &c., &c.

"Say of the following persons what they do, &c. The farmer," &c., &c.

§ 4. *Relation of Number.* Examples : The fox is cunning. The foxes are cunning, &c., &c. Each spirit is invisible. All spirits are invisible, &c., &c. Then follow observations on the subject of the section.

The pupil is required, by way of exercise, to put the subjects of sentences already given into the plural number ; and directed, to "form sentences of words given, using with each subject a suitable indefinite, numeral adjective." Cherry red,—Animals noxious, &c., &c.

§ 5. *Relation of Person.* The subject is, in this section, treated in a manner which has been perhaps sufficiently illustrated. First, examples are given of the use of the personal pronouns ; then the author gives an explanation of grammatical person, and then follow exercises for the pupil.

§ 6. *Relation of Time.*

§ 7. *Relation of Mode.*

§ 8. *Emphasis and Position of Words.* In the last part of this section, the author points out the position which the parts of a sentence usually hold in it ; and how their positions may be varied. This, with its examples, makes one of the most useful sections of the work.

Part Second treats of the Enlarged Simple Sentence.

§ 9. *Of the Qualification of a Thing.* The exercises are very copious. I quote a few.

"Modify the subjects of the following sentences : Lime is brittle. Linen is white," &c., &c.

"Form sentences of the following words, having the subjects qualified by nouns in the possessive case : —mane long. —bill crooked," &c., &c.

"Write sentences in which the thing-words (nouns) are qualified by attributive thing-words with prepositions. Ex.: A dress *of silk* is costly," &c., &c.

§ 10. *On the Supplement.* After a full statement of the cases in which supplementary words are required, the pupil is directed to form sentences.

(1.) Of given words, and supply the verb with its supplement which shall answer the question "*What?*" "Ox pull. Dog pursue," &c., &c.

(2.) And say of the following things *what they have*, the supplement being qualified by an attributive, or a numeral adjective. Ex.: "The stag has *branching antlers*. Deer. Buffalo—," &c., &c.

(3.) The verbs and adjectives having for supplements nouns with "of." Ex.: "I will not think of my sufferings. Boy speak— Mother dream —," &c., &c.

(4.) The supplement being in answer to the question "to whom?" or, "to what?" "Father write —. Idleness related —," &c., &c.

(5.) The supplement being connected with certain given prepositions.

(6.) The supplement expressing an effect of the action. (This is the Factitive relation.) "Water converted —. Grain ground —," &c., &c.

§ 11. *Two or more Supplements.*

§ 12. *The Passive and Reflexive Form of the Verb.* Under this, besides remarks and other exercises, are exercises on transforming sentences given before, by using verbs in the passive voice.

§ 13. *Circumstances of Place.* Exercises in forming sentences; (1.) Introducing a circumstance of place on the question "Where?" (2.) Introducing circumstances of place on the question "Whence?" (3.) Introducing circumstances of place on the question "Whither?"

§ 14. *Circumstances of Time.*

§ 15. *Circumstances of Manner.*

§ 16. *Circumstances of Cause.*

§ 17. *Combination of Circumstances.* Ex.: "Early to-morrow morning, father will take us out in his sail-boat to the western bank of the river, near the beautiful little village, on a fishing excursion."

§ 18. *Combination of all the Members in the Enlarged Simple Sentence.* Ex.: "The watchman examines. The attentive watchman examines. The watchman examines *the fastenings*. The watchman examines *carefully*. The watchman examines *every night*. The watchman examines *his ward*. The watchman examines *from personal interest*. The attentive watchman of the ward carefully examines, from personal interest, the fastenings of the houses of his ward. The attentive watchman of the twelfth ward carefully examines, every night, from his personal interest in the security of his fellow citizens, the fastenings of the different houses in his ward," &c., &c.

Sentences are given for the pupil to expand.

§ 19. *Observations on the Position of Words in Enlarged Simple Sentences.* Exercises for the pupils consist of sentences the position of the words of which is to be changed.

This ends the Second Part of the book.

The Third Part relates to the Contracted Sentence and comparison of adjectives, and extends over thirteen pages.

The Fourth Part treats of the Compound Sentence,—the dif-

ferent methods of joining together the members of a sentence. This part occupies seventy-four pages, and concludes the volume.

You will not, I think, Mr. Editor, find the room occupied by this article illy used, if it induce teachers to examine a very unpretending little volume, which came to my knowledge almost by accident, and which I have not even seen advertised in the newspapers.

N. T.

THE TEACHER'S REWARDS.

THE rewards of the teacher differ from those of other men. The teacher needs faith.

The careworn merchant has been busied during the week with perplexing schemes, cautious calculations, pleasing hopes, and painful fears. But when on Saturday night he once more takes his seat at his desk and carefully balances the long columns of loss and gain, the generous result abundantly rewards him for all his ceaseless toil and tormenting anxieties. He *feels* that he is rewarded. He *feels* that he has received an equivalent for whatever of brain, soul, or sinew he has expended for the week. And he is right. He *has* received his reward. It is too often the case that the lawyer, if he has got a case and a fee, is satisfied. The fireside distress he may have caused, the friendships he may have sundered, the burning enmities he may have inflamed, are no part of his concern. His purpose is a living. The law is his trade. And hence the defence of a villain and the cause of the righteous alike yield him a full reward. The faithful physician, after days of careful watching by the sick man's bed, anxiously reading the final issue in each movement of feeble life, puts at least a part of *his* reward into his pocket, and realizes a full equivalent in seeing him upon whom so much of the happiness of others depended, and around whom so many household hopes had gathered, once more restored to a happy family.

The teacher's sphere, the teacher's aim, the teacher's duties, and the teacher's rewards, differ from all these. The teacher who is worthy of his profession neither expects nor seeks compensation in a *salary*. He knows that *no* salary can equal in worth the value of his toils. He feels that he is dealing with that which is above all price. He barter not with sugars and silks that minister to temporary comfort or vanity. He makes no merchandise of the passions of men. Teaching is not his *trade*, nor does he speculate upon the infirmities and whims of his erring fellow mortal. It is difficult for even the teacher himself fully to comprehend the true dignity of his labors. Is he not apt to forget sometimes that he is doing anything more

than mechanically going through a daily routine of formal drudgery?

Fellow Teacher, forget not that there is divinity in your school-room; that your hands are daily shaping that which shall bear your impress forever; that there are gathered about you those whose condition in this life, and whose *everlasting* character, are in a fearful measure to be determined by yourself. You are fashioning the imperishable spirit. You have committed to your nurturing the embryo capacities of an archangel. What a sacred, what a precious charge! Yours is a mission not even beneath the exalted dignity of a Gabriel. And what adequate compensation is annexed to such high and holy duties? Is it that which is received at the hands of a *town treasurer*? The true teacher knows that all the treasuries of earth could not recompense him. His *work* is his reward. By their fruits shall your labors be known, and by their fruits shall they be rewarded.

But days and months of weary toil we spend and see *no* fruits, perhaps. Though our pupils may seem to cherish our counsels, appreciate our kind endeavors, value and treasure up our precepts, and really to acquire knowledge; yet our annoyances are so many and so trying, the waywardness of some so obstinate, the follies of others apparently so incorrigible, the intellect of many so obtuse, and the progress of all so gradual, that teaching seems sometimes to be really an endurance. Nay, fellow teacher, have patience! Have faith. Be faithful and full of faith, and thy reward *shall come*. Diligently and hopefully sow thy seed and it *shall* take root and fructify. This is inevitable. Nothing can be more certain, for there is *no* barrenness in the human soul. No mind that ever God created *can* be uninfluenced by a teacher's precepts. The attributes of the immortal mind are such that no *child* can hear your individual word, observe in your countenance a single expression of thought or feeling, be a witness of the most trifling act that betrays in the least the temper of your mind, the motive of your conduct, or the nature of your spirit, without being either a worse or a better *man*. How much watchfulness and discretion become the teacher then.

There is an infinity in the influence of the teacher's most trifling conduct, wherever he is within the notice of his pupil, be it in or out of the school-room. This little earth of ours, comparatively but a speck, exerts an influence that we cannot estimate, upon all created worlds. Its attractive power is first felt by each member of our planetary family — a power which neither the mightiest nor the most distant of them can refuse to obey. The viewless paths of all, as they wheel in their everlasting circuits, are different in form and in position from what they would be if our own globe had no existence. The impulse our whole solar system receives, is transmitted to the next neighboring system, thence to the next and the next indefinitely, thus trav-

elling farther and farther into the depths of space, until the influence of our puny globe is diffused throughout the measureless universe,—until its existence is known and its power acknowledged by the most distant star that inhabiteth the suburbs of creation.

Thus wide is your sphere; thus vast your power. A simple thought you may communicate to-day, shall awake a fellow thought, create a new desire, excite a new motive, inflame a new aspiration, and each of these shall beget in endless generation, kindred emotions, until the one original little thought shall have so multiplied itself as to pervade and leaven the whole character,—till it shall have become an integral part of the being. And thus bearing about through life the indelible impress it at first received, it will, it must communicate thereof to others' minds, and they in their turn to others and to others in an ever-widening and ever-expanding sphere, until it shall have compassed the world and traversed all time. This is no idle fancy. Caesar and Alexander are in a *real* measure responsible for the bloody career of a Napoleon; and a Washington shall animate to patriotic thought and patriotic deed so long as one generous impulse resides in the human heart.

Thus does the teacher reproduce himself perpetually. Our influence can never die. These bodies shall go to their graves and be forgotten. But that which through life has been radiating from our spirit, shall be ever living and ever busy. And if we are faithful and true, it shall be a part of our future delight, with the acute vision of the redeemed, actually to *perceive* those impulses which have had their parentage in our own hearts, become our faithful ministers, perpetuating our character, going to and fro among men, restraining the reckless, whispering courage to fainting virtue, inspiring a love for the good and true, animating to lofty purpose, and guiding the nobler yearnings of the spirit upward, heavenward. Thus a single word kindly and fitly spoken may foster a holy principle, which in its endless succession of saving influence, shall garner into eternity a golden harvest of good fruits and rich rewards, that shall abundantly repay the labors of a life.

With faith, with faith, then, behold the recompense of your present toils, when with this vast retinue of results you appear before your Judge, with happy confidence exclaiming, "Here, Lord, am I, and those whom thou hast given me." Then, and not till then, shall we receive final and complete compensation. Yet even here do we receive rich reward, as those who have been moulding their minds under our guidance go forth from us bearing our image, to do the great battles of life, and we discern the results of our school-room toils in their conduct and successes. Wherefore in the midst of vexation of spirit, of weariness of soul and flesh, disheartened by the *appearance* of unproductive and

unrequited devotion, take courage, have faith. Your wages *shall come*. You are daily making investments, which shall yield increase either of good or ill. This God himself has made infallible by the very constitution of mind. So sure as influence is sown, so sure shall it return to thee again with its vast harvest of results, having faithfully fulfilled its mission to ten thousand hearts, ministering of good or ill. Wherefore, fellow teacher, in patience and in faith, "*learn to labor and to wait.*"

A WORD FITLY SPOKEN, HOW GOOD IS IT!

"LITTLE things" make up the sum of human existence. In the natural world, objects, animate and inanimate, are composed of particles. Innumerable shining sands form the barrier against which old Ocean loves to fret. Crystal drops compose the vast extent of water which covers nearly three-fourths of our globe. The "blessed light," which cheers us day by day, may be separated into an infinite number of rays, each blending with its neighbor while faithfully performing its work. And the rich odors, so greatful to the senses, which float in our atmosphere, are actually tiny atoms, escaping from the dewy petals of the rose or lily, which blossoms at our feet. Meet emblems are those odors, floating round us all unseen, of the influence of "fitly spoken" words.

Words are among the "little things" which determine our influence for good or ill.

Speak they of sympathy, or encouragement, or reproof, if so be they are spoken kindly, they are like "apples of gold, in pictures of silver."

And no class has the privilege or opportunity of distributing so largely these small but precious coins, as the teacher. True, many are the words of counsel and instruction that fall from a parent's lip. But they are confined chiefly to those of his own household. The faithful pastor, as he kindly cares for all his flock, passes not by the lowliest, even without some "fitly spoken" word, which may, perchance, sink deeply in the youthful heart, there taking root, to bring forth fruit, long perhaps after he who planted the good seed shall have passed away. But his intercourse is limited, while the teacher meets daily with his band. And daily is his own character partially recreated in each one of his number, through the medium of his words. It is his to prune and fashion the slender sapling, which shall hereafter become the mighty oak. To his keeping is given the gold, while molten, and he may mould it in what form soever he pleaseth. To him is entrusted the fertile soil of deathless intellect, and whether the seeds there scattered shall produce flowers that will cheer and bless with their life-giving fragrance,

or blast and destroy with their poisonous breath, depends very much on him.

Would you have influence with those who look to you for guidance and instruction? bear with you the law of kindness. Would you command their respect? let your words, though they inflict *pain* for the time, drop kindly from your lips. Would you lead them all in her ways, whose paths are pleasantness and peace? labor constantly, earnestly, *kindly*. The child has his troubles, as well as the man, and they are as hard for him to bear. Therefore he needs words of sympathy. Let him have them,—let him have them too from his teacher. And let that teacher remember, he has done no vain thing, for he has made a human being happier, and perchance saved him the “loss of a day.” For it is the wonderful virtue of sympathy to lessen grief, and the troubled spirit soothed, will rouse again its energies, and toil on as before.

The youthful heart, too, however hopeful, will sometimes be depressed, discouraged.

Then a single word, if it be “fitly spoken” by a loved teacher, will, like the magician’s wand, work wonders. And when the word of reproof is needed, let not the faithful teacher shrink from duty, but rebuke, exhort, entreat, with all patience, and he shall win the reward of his well-doing.

Lawrence.

MARY.

“ONWARD IS THY PATH,
UPWARD IS THY HOME.”

ONWARD, onward, is thy pathway,
Pause ye not in life’s career;
Think, and speak, and act, with heart-strength,
Never falter, never fear.

Be ye sure the right is chosen,
Be ye sure thy path is true;
Let the “still, small voice” commend thee,
Onward, then, and dare, and do.

Shout for virtue! Twine her flowers
’Round the sunny brow of youth;
Urge them onward in the pathway,
Lighted by the star of Truth.

Shout for justice! Let the baseness
Of the oppressor’s heart be known;
Teach the injured one, that vengeance
Resteth with his God alone.

“Peace on earth, good will to nations;”
Publish this in every clime,
Every year, and day, and moment,
Onward, to the end of time.

Then, when all thy days are ended,
When thy last heart-throb is given,
When the grave thy form receiveth,
Upward! then, and *rest* in heaven.

Lawrence.

ANNA.

OLD METHODS AND NEW ONES.

Sempora mutendur et nos mutamus cum illis.

THERE is danger in the adoption of so many new ideas of teaching, that we may neglect many good customs, well tried and tested, but crowded out of notice by the bustle of innovation. Among these is the use of the Sum-book, now discarded, but very useful in forming a good clerk—teaching him to write figures and arrange them neatly; giving an interest to the calculation on the slate, that it be correct as about to be registered and dignified with a place in a book. The arguments on the other side are, that it will offer an inducement to idleness; be too much help in review, and take too much time. As to the first, it may be said the moral sense of a school should be a bar to that; and also of the second, that we must ever be putting boys upon their honor. The third reason falls to the ground, when it is considered that pupils write very little with any object beyond writing. Most copies are written to be of no value and with no object. Here is one. It is truly surprising how well boys will write, and compose too, who are engaged in any real occasion of writing; a letter to father for some money, or to mother for some cake and *goodies* to cheer the pangs of absence from home.

In learning Latin is there any way better than that pursued at the Latin School in Boston, under Master Gould? Does any grammar supersede his? Digging was the word then. The pupil was cast loose with dictionary and grammar, to find his way, to dig out the sense of his author.

Take Columbus sailing into new seas where he knew there must be land; he finds at last the plan of the language, with something of the zest of discovery, and if he conquers the tongue, with something of the joy of conquest. He finds out a philosophy of language by feeling his way from fact to fact, as the observer of nature deduces plan in her operations from repeated evidences of design.

Another old method was, introducing into our schools rewards and punishments. What a difficult question is here! If our schools were made up of American youth, there could be but one reply to the question whether the ferule be laid aside entirely; but our schools are filled up with foreign children, brought up under a religion of fear, accustomed at home to motives of fear. Let the wise decide this question,—what teachers ought to do. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby School, thought bad boys ought to be removed from the school-room. But we cannot afford to do this: we want to make bad boys, good; for this our schools are established.

We cannot have select schools for good boys, and leave the

idle and disobedient to the street. Before we do this last hopeless act, after everything else has been tried, let Solomon's rule be applied, and *perhaps*, I say, in laying on the rod we may save the child.

One of the best schools in a certain elongated part of Massachusetts ever taught,—if we may judge a tree by its fruits, and of a school by the gratitude of the pupils in mature life,—was kept by an old man, very kind, but very despotic and impartial. He took his pay in work from the boys when they could not pay money, and received all applicants who desired his instruction. "Boys," he would say, "you must not throw stones, nor lie; get your lessons, and study to be kind to every living thing." If his rules were broken, he used the rod freely. He taught many a shipmaster navigation, and lately made safe harbor, we trust, in heaven, following the star of truth for a long life.

B.

Resident Editors' Table.

Resident Editors. { JOSHUA BATES, JR. | WILLIAM D. SWAN, } of Boston.
 { J. D. PHILLERICK, | GIDEON F. TRAYER, }

OUR JOURNAL.

THIS publication does not owe its birth to accident or chance, or to individual enterprise. It had its origin in the need which teachers felt, of a *Teacher's Journal*, one which should record the thoughts and experience of practical teachers. To build up the profession, and to carry forward the cause of education, it was felt that something was needed of a different description from most of the matter which comes before the public, on the subject of education. The *Massachusetts Teacher* was designed to supply this want.

The steady increase of its subscription list is an encouraging fact, and seems to promise permanency and success. Calls for complete sets are coming in from other States, as well as from our own. The question of its continuance seems to be no longer doubtful. But the question now is, how can it be improved so that it may meet the wants of the greatest number, and more fully accomplish the object for which it was designed? This question the Editors and Publisher are earnestly trying to solve. They hope to make it a publication acceptable and useful to all classes of instructors, and to all the friends of education. It is their design to mingle in its pages the discussion of elevated themes, adapted to the study of the reflecting and philosophic mind, with directions for the elementary steps in commencing the work of school-keeping. They will aim to lay before their

readers the most important improvements in the means and methods of instruction, and to give brief notices of the principal publications on the subject of education. In a word, they intend to spare no pains to render it a journal worthy of Massachusetts, and worthy of the cause it professes to advocate, and any suggestions or contributions from any quarter, calculated to promote the accomplishment of this object, will be gratefully received.

J. D. P.

TRUANCY.

WE publish, with great pleasure, the subjoined Statute and Ordinance concerning truants and absentees from school. We believe these enactments to be wise and salutary. So far as this law is a departure from the beaten track of criminal legislation, it is a departure in the right direction. There is nothing in it to disturb the most conservative. It is eminently a preventive provision, and in that its wisdom and safety consists. It is calculated to nip vice in the bud, and to stay the flood of crime by cutting off its tributaries. Our jails and penitentiaries are seldom recruited from those who have attended a good school during the legal term. This law, if well administered, will secure the attendance of many whom no power hitherto exercised has been able to keep within the walls of the school-room. Since its adoption in Boston, many who were not attending school have come in and begun a new career. Its adoption in Roxbury has produced similar results there.

J. D. P.

THE ACT of the Legislature of Massachusetts, empowering cities and towns to make provisions concerning truants, approved, April 4, 1850.

1. Each of the several cities and towns in this commonwealth is authorized and empowered to make all needful provisions and arrangements concerning habitual truants, and children not attending school, without any regular and lawful occupation, growing up in ignorance, between the ages of six and fifteen years; and, also, all such ordinances and by-laws, respecting such children, as shall be deemed most conducive to their welfare, and the good order of such city or town; and there shall be annexed to such ordinances, suitable penalties, not exceeding, for any one breach, a fine of twenty dollars: *provided*, that said ordinances and by-laws shall be approved by the court of common pleas for the county, and shall not be repugnant to the laws of the commonwealth.

2. The several cities and towns availing themselves of the

provisions of this act, shall appoint, at the annual meetings of said town, or annually by the mayor and aldermen of said cities, three or more persons, who alone shall be authorized to make the complaints, in every case of violation of said ordinances or by-laws, to the justice of the peace, or other judicial officer, who, by said ordinances, shall have jurisdiction in the matter, which persons, thus appointed, shall alone have authority to carry into execution the judgments of said justices of the peace, or other judicial officer.

3. The said justices of the peace, or other judicial officers, shall, in all cases, at their discretion, in place of the fine aforesaid, be authorized to order children, proved before them to be growing up in truancy, and without the benefit of the education provided for them by law, to be placed, for such periods of time as they may judge expedient, in such institution of instruction, or house of reformation, or other suitable situation, as may be assigned or provided for the purpose, under the authority conveyed by the first section, in each city or town availing itself of the powers herein granted.

ORDINANCE of the City of Boston concerning truant children and absentees from school, passed October 21, 1850. This ordinance was presented to the court of common pleas for the County of Suffolk, at the October term, 1850, and was approved by the court.

SECT. 1. The city of Boston hereby adopts the two hundred and ninety-fourth chapter of the laws of the commonwealth for the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty, entitled, "an act concerning truant children and absentees from school," and avails itself of the provisions of the same.

SECT. 2. Any of the persons described in the first section of said act, upon conviction of any offence therein described, shall be punished by fine not exceeding twenty dollars; and the senior justice, by appointment of the police court, shall have jurisdiction of the offences set forth in said act.

SECT. 3. The house for the employment and reformation of juvenile offenders is hereby assigned and provided as the institution of instruction, house of reformation, or suitable situation, mentioned in the third section of said act.

DEDICATION OF NEW SCHOOL-HOUSES.

THE erection of a good school-house is, for the community where it is located, an important event, and one which deserves to be marked by dedicatory services. Such occasions bring out many to hear the interests of education advocated, who can be

reached by no other means. Every new school-house, however humble, should be dedicated to the uses of education by appropriate ceremonies, before the key is passed over to the teacher. We are pleased to transfer to our pages the following notices of dedications. The people of Barnstable may well be proud of one of their school-houses. We refer to the one occupied by the Grammar School, in the village of Hyannis. For convenience, elegance, and economy, it surpasses all others we have seen. It is a model house for a village. It will accommodate 250 pupils, and cost \$5,000. J. D. P.

DEDICATION OF A NEW SCHOOL-HOUSE IN BARNSTABLE.—The new school-house recently erected at Marston's Mills, was dedicated on Monday afternoon, 2d December. The services were as follows:—Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Wakefield, of Osterville; an original hymn was then sung, and a very able and instructive address delivered by Mr. Freeman N. Blake, Principal of the Barnstable Academy; after which, appropriate remarks were made by Messrs. Wakefield, N. Hinckley, Esq., and Dr. Allen. The day was fine, and the exercises passed off very pleasantly to the large number of parents and friends present. The house is a very commodious one. The health and convenience of the scholars appear to have been consulted in its erection, and we hope the scholars will improve their advantages and make rapid progress in their studies.

In erecting this house after the approved models of the present day, and in consecrating it to learning and virtue, the citizens of that village have acted wisely and with commendable forethought for the good of coming generations; and it is hoped that the example will be speedily followed in other portions of the town and Cape, where the school-houses are in an unfit condition for the reception of pupils.—*Barnstable Patriot*.

DEDICATION OF HIGH SCHOOL-HOUSE IN LYNN.—Rev. C. C. Shackford, in behalf of the building committee, placed the key of the building in the hands of the Chairman of the School Committee. The following paragraphs are extracted from his address on the occasion:—

“The building has been erected at a cost of about \$8,000, after designs and specifications furnished by Mr. Bryant, architect, of Boston. The work has been done, according to contract, and in the most thorough and faithful manner, by Messrs. Tewksbury & Caldwell, of this city. The Committee did not feel authorized to expend anything for superfluous ornament, but sought to erect a plain, convenient, neat, substantial building, which for many years would be adequate for the growing wants of the place.

"The entrances are on opposite sides ; the eastern for females, and the western for males. In the basement are a large cistern, and two furnaces of the most approved pattern, adequate for warming every part of the building. Immediately opening from the entry, on the opposite sides, are two dressing-rooms, furnished with ranges of hooks, umbrella-stands, sinks, and pumps. In the same story are two recitation-rooms, twenty-two by twenty-five feet. By a staircase, five feet in width, you reach the hall, about forty-six feet long, forty-five broad, and sixteen in height. Opening out of it, immediately behind the teacher's platform, are two rooms, intended for private rooms of the teachers, and in which are deposited the library and apparatus. The building has an observatory, is covered with slate, and has copper gutters. It is adequately provided with ventilating flues, connected at the roof with two patent ejectors, sufficient, it is believed, to keep each part well supplied with pure and wholesome air. The recitation rooms are provided with settees, and the main hall with Wales's patent desks and chairs.

"The main room is seated with desks for one hundred and twenty scholars, which it was thought would be enough for several years to come. If necessary, fifty additional seats can be placed upon the floor. The School Committee of the last year prepared a three years' course of study, supposing that about forty scholars each year would be advanced from the grammar schools, which would take from these schools an average of eight pupils each year. These would be separated from smaller scholars, and would enjoy the exclusive care and instruction of competent teachers. In these commodious rooms, free from the noise and bustle of a large school composed of younger children, they can prepare themselves, by the study of the higher branches of a mathematical and classical education, for the duties and struggles of manly life."

"Take this house and consecrate it as the temple of learning. May it be a place where order and science, and the amenities of life shall be held dear. May it be held as a sacred trust for those youthful spirits who in coming years shall pass its threshold, and spend so many months of the fresh and ardent years of youth under its roof. Its walls may be laid, by time, even with the ground ; but the minds and hearts here blessed by influences of good, and by the light of truth, shall shine like the stars, forever and ever."